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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/12/2017

TAGS: PGOV PHUM BM FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH SEARCHING FOR WAYS TO PRESSURE BURMA

REF: STATE 164893

Classified By: Pol/MC Josiah Rosenblatt for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Poloff delivered reftel demarche on December 13 to MFA desk officer for Burma, Jeremie Petit. Petit reiterated French interest in maintaining pressure on the Burmese regime, and worried that the international pressure on Burma and other Asian countries to start a dialogue on humanitarian issues is weakening. The GOF is currently drafting a strategic plan for Burma, which explores new options including a worldwide arms embargo on Burma. When asked about targeted sanctions on Burmese banks, Petit responded that the GOF remains interested in finding a way to "touch the generals' accounts," which are located in Singapore. Believing that sanctions on Burmese banks might hurt average citizens, the GOF hopes to find ways to mobilize the international community. Petit noted that it would be a challenge to convince China to support an arms embargo, while Russia by his estimation, will follow China. Petite noted that the GOF is open to U.S. ideas on how to press China and Singapore on the Burmese issue.

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